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Congo News Letter

OCTOBER 1947

Vol. XXXVIII OCTOBER 1947 No. 4.

CHRISTMAS NUMBER

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Published Quarterly by the Missionaries of the A.B.F.M.S. at Sims House Press, Leopoldville.

Subscription price 35 cents a year. Subscriptions may be sent to Treasurer, A.B.F.M.S., 152 Madison Ave., New York, 16, N.Y. Subscription price in Congo 15 francs. Address correspondence to Editor C.N.L., A.B.F.M.S., Leopoldville II, Belgian Congo.

OUR CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

LEONARD GITTINGS

The Christmas message revolves around three things. First, there is a *star*, pointing the way to the birthplace of the Christ. Then there is a *song*, echoing over the fields of Bethlehem and heard by the shepherds whose hearts were attuned heavenward. Finally there is a *Savior*, whose birth and reconciling work are the theme of the angels' song. It is fitting that a heavenly light and heavenly music should form the background at the appearance of Him who came to bring redemption and peace.

Since that first Christmas the message of redeeming grace has encircled the world. It has penetrated into crowded cities, remote hamlets, and the recesses of many a jungle. Millions have found new life through hearing it. The tribes of the Congo Hinterland have heard, and a new day has dawned for many who once sat in darkness. Upon them, too, hath the light shined.

At our annual field conference the reading of the reports concerning the work on our various stations is always a source of inspiration. While the problems and difficulties are not overlooked, we rejoice together over the news of victories to which our Christ has led. Individual lives, churches, communities, sometimes whole districts have come under His sway in a fuller manner as the Gospel of regeneration, peace and life eternal has been spread through thousands of villages in our far-flung Congo field. We have thought, therefore, that in our christmas number of the Congo News Letter we would share with you some of the inspiration that came to us in the reports given at this years' conference. As we send sincere Christmas greetings to our many friends, we want you to rejoice with us that the Prince of Peace who came to earth on that first Christmas and whom we proclaim as the Savior to these Congo people is still winning the hearts of many to Himself in this land of need and opportunity.

A DIGEST OF THE YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

A Message from the Congo Mission Secretary — B.W. Armstrong

A casual study of this year's statistics reveals that a lot of work has been done, a great deal accomplished, considerable responsibility is being borne by the Congolese workers, and God's blessing has been showered upon us in abundance.

The figures on staff do not and cannot reveal the burdens borne. However if one divides the total number of baptisms by the number of missionaries, it works out to many converts per person. Or if one takes the total number of school children and divides them by the number of educational missionaries, it would make a big class for each one. Or if the total number of patients in the hospitals are added up and divided by the number of medical workers, it makes a big clinic for each one. This, too, can be observed, wherever white supervision has been lacking, total numbers in that service decline. When missionaries return from furlough and take up the job, one sees an immediate forward step in his department. This is in no way minimizing the considerable amount of work carried by, and very real work of, our Congo colleagues. They can and do good work under supervision, but as yet they should not be left to their own deviees.

EVANGELISM

The evangelistic report is very encouraging from all sides. Of course, we all feel the obligation of winning our African folk to allegiance to Christ and the response to evangelistic preaching is good. But apart from the out-reach of the church, there is also an encouraging response to self support, support for the schools, better building, and a beginning in sending help to others quite outside Congo. There is a small but hopeful increase in native staff, both men and women, another increase in the number employed by the local churches, some new churches established, a few churches gained in the total for self support, a decided gain in church buildings

and a small increase in other places of worship. When you take into consideration that all the Tondo work was transferred during the year to another mission, it means that we have really had a wonderful year.

The additions by baptism are almost greater than we can properly care for. More than three thousand for the mission. Since Leopoldville and Kimpese account for less than twenty, it means that our five bush stations have done a great year's work out in the villages. Looking forward to the return of the Robbins and the Lewis Browns to strengthen the station work in the Kwango and that of Watkins for the treasury which will enable Harry Brown to give more time to the Leo church, we can anticipate another great year. Even so, it is possible that the number of baptisms may decrease another year. Our evangelistic missionaries are concerned over the slackness of so many of the church members, and feel that there must be more adequate shepherding and education of the Christians, both before and after baptism. A stiffer standard for baptism might mean smaller numbers but probably a more capable group of members.

Contributions from the native people are so far ahead of last year that Mr. Gittings of Sona Bata sent in a special letter to say that it seemed incredible down there, but that he knows the reported amount is correct, for it has all passed through his hands. Kikongo, Sona Bata, and Vanga all report remarkable gains in native contributions. Six stations gave one hundred and fifty thousand francs more than seven stations did last year. We hope that this gain can be preserved and even be increased. Prices and wages are still going up out here.

Many of our stations do quite a lot in the way of home missions and work which is all to the good. The new organization for the Congo churches of our mission is causing considerable comment and the folk are digging into their pockets for money to send their representatives. Vanga has an efficacious method of self help by which the new work is set forward and the weaker members of the old churches are strengthend. But this year we have opportunity to report

gifts from Congo going out to others. We believe this is only the beginning of better things, of a new conception of Congo's place in the Universal Church, and willingness to meet the obligations of that position.

EDUCATIONAL

There is a very decided appreciation of the advantage of education out here in Congo. There is still too much of the paternal attitude in that the Congo people as the children look to the mission as their father to provide them with the the blessings of modern education. But there is also considerable willingness to work and to pay for an education. The total amounts given as fees and for support of the teachers by the churches make it clear that the Congo people are emerging rapidly from a lethargic and satisfied ignorance into a deep hunger for knowledge. Many of us would be happier if there were more hunger for the truth of God in this desire for knowledge. We feel that too many of our students go out after several years in our mission schools without a definite purpose to live for and serve God no matter what their occupation might be. We are trying to inculcate a better attitude.

Banza Manteke have already part of the middle school on the station, Leopoldville has a class in this higher work, and Vanga will soon be doing it. This means, except in the case of Leo, not additional years on the mission station, but moving the lower classes from the station out to the regional schools. This is all to the good. It is my opinion that all general education offered under mission supervision can be done in the regional schools, and only those who have offered themselves for life work, and desire to be fitted for life service need be brought in to the stations. This can not be accomplished soon, but, unless the State takes over education, we as a mission cannot afford the high cost of big boarding schools. One good supervisor of education on each station, with adequate means of transport, could supervise a goodly number of well qualified schools strategically placed in the field of that station. As a mission we have not

yet agreed on this as a policy.

To meet the needs of our own people, and to meet the competition of well educated native *abbés* of the Catholic church, the standard of education at E.P.I. should be definitely raised. This can not be done until our stations can furnish better qualified candidates for the school, but every year's delay is dangerous to the welfare of the Church of Christ in Congo. The quality of pastoral leadership in our churches is too low from an educational standpoint. Our pastors are faithful men who hold the respect of their people, but we are losing almost all of our young men. Pastors would hold the interst of our young people if they were qualified to set up and lead youth programs in an adequate way. This again would depend on the willingness of the church to give adequate support to these better trained men.

MEDICAL

Our medical staff has been very inadequate during the past year. We have kept all hospitals, dispensaries, and the medical school operating, but not on an efficient basis The practice of modern medicine has become far too complicated for untrained, or inadequately trained, people to take it over. Two doctors are not enough, and for a while we had only one. Neither do we have enough nurses. The nurses who come out here and take over a hospital with occasional visits from a doctor are the unsung heroines of the mission. What, then, can we say for those who even without a nurse's training step into the breach in time of necessity? One thing we can say is that probably the colonial govenment will not much longer permit such actions on our part. We must be able to look forward to an adequate and continuous staff for medical work. The State is developing a greatly enlarged system of medical service for the people of Congo. They will subsidize a mission hospital where such work is soundly established and sufficiently staffed. They will, soon withdraw subsidies from hospitals and dispensaries which can not assure continuity of work under medical workers who have the necessary diplomas.

The medical statistics do not show much change except in the costs department. If that column is checked over, one will notice startling advances in expenditures.

* * *

The young missionaries doing their first term are carrying heavy loads and doing exceptionally well in my estimation. The Vanga staff with Dr. Osterholm and the four young people have completed a remarkable year's work. The statistics tell of the advance on all lines, but not of the effort put forth in order to reach these goals. However, three of the five missionaries are due for furlough within a year. Phyllis Benner in Leopoldville is also doing a big job and doing it very well. We must have a family for the work here, but in the meantime Phyllis is not only carrying on the work but setting it forward. She, too, is due for furlough within the year. At Banza Manteke Annis Ford has a big job on her hands and is measuring up. These first termers are setting a high standard for those who are to follow them.

One of the greatest challenges facing us are the hundreds of mission trained boys and men now working around Leopoldville who are not maintaining their Christian life. I have been asked by the Leo station staff to be the missionary representative to this group who call themselves the Former Students of the A.B.F.M.S. One is troubled to know where time can best be used.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. *Isaïah 9:6*

BANZA MANTEKE

ADVANCE IN SELF SUPPORT
TRAINING CONGO HOUSEKEEPERS
NATIVE NURSES GIVE FAITHFUL SERVICE

Religious Emphasis Week was held in February when over seventy young boys and girls stepped forward to accept Christ as their Saviour.

Mr. and Mrs. Engwall spent a month on the Bangu, visiting all the villages there and have also spent several days at several of the regional schools.

During the year's itinerations there have been decisions in most of the villages visited. The great problem is still drinking wine made from sugar cane. ..... The Sona Mpangu Station Church this year of its own accord contributed two thousand francs toward food for the Central School pupils and assumed construction of a Monitor's house. We have also heard that contributions are being solicited among former Central School pupils for typewriters for the school. These are all signs that point in the right direction and show that the indigenous church is at last coming to realize its responsibilities for the work.

* * *

Frequent visits by the school choir have been made to the surrounding villages; they have been much appreciated by the people. Annis Ford and Remy Malutama have carried on the educational work of the station, except for the girls' school which is in charge of Mrs. Engwall. Both boys and girls have been taught cooking, the girls are learning sewing, sixty of them made their own dresses this year. Mrs. Engwall has taught a class in Family Relations to the graduating class. At Banza Nkazi the head monitor together with his pupils has completed a class room and also a house for the monitor in brick and has planted so much food that the people come from the surrounding villages to buy food from the school.

The evident joy of the lepers, as they moved into their neat yet simple brick houses, was seen by Miss Ehnbom. Several new houses have gone up at the leper colony.

The nurses in charge of the dispensaries in the district are carrying on nobly; on one visit there were as many as twenty patients hospitalized in the dispensary; on another there were twelve; in the other dispensaries there were smaller numbers hospitalized but it gives one an idea of the large numbers being helped physically and spiritually. We are happy for the visits of Dr. Tuttle. We also are thankful to God for our medical workers of whom special attention should be given to Lutete Hezekiah who has been with us for over twenty years. Mboko, the leper also deserves special mention. There are many others who are doing exceptional work.

Esther Ehnbom has had a busy year with the station work at the hospital, and visits to the six dispensaries and baby clinics. Mrs. Abbott has been running the station Baby Clinic.

A CHRISTMAS WISH

May Jesus Christ, the heavenly Guest,
Keep his own Christmas in your breast:
Reveal to you "God's glory" bright
Which lightens up earth's darkest night;
Give you the reverent shepherds' thrill
When first they heard, "Peace and good will";
Attune your ears that you may hear
The angel songs which banish "fear".
Grant you the "joy" which comes to earth
With Christ the Saviour's lowly birth,
And fill your heart to ever sing
The glories of your Saviour-King!

— *Joseph Taylor Britan*

from the Watchman Examiner.

KIKONGO

INCREASED STAFF
NEW DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION
TEAM WORK IN THE HEALING MINISTRY

The practically untouched Bayanzi and Bamfunuka fields which cover a large part of the territory in the Kikongo field, necessitates an evangelistic family. The work of evangelism is showing the effects of the lack of a family to give full time to the field work, and we are looking forward to the time when we can have an evangelist for this work. The constantly repeated cry of our pastors and village workers is. "When are we going to have a man who can spend all his time with the churches?" For many years a family for full-time evangelistic work stood at the head of Kikongo's requests for staff. At long last, and with deep thanksgiving, we now have the Robbins, who will soon be building on the foundations laid in the Bayaka field.

We begin this new year of work with thanksgiving to God for having increased our staff beyond anything which we have previously had, and with confidence that He will continue to multiply our "loaves and fishes".

The girls have grown in leadership for good in the dormitories, in conducting meetings, and in helping with choirs and with girls' sports. Our leaders in school are making advances in the struggle for the higher life of the Spirit. So often the purpose of the pupils in coming to school is quite different from ours in sending them. They try to conform to regulations as well as they can without giving up their ambitions, and we try to mold them as much as we can without starting a rebellion. We hope to accomplish our purpose by emphasis on the fact that the riches of heaven are far greater than those of earth, and that real progress is made by what people gain by their own efforts rather than by that which is received without being earned.

In December Mr. Smith was able to introduce some more advanced courses in Agriculture into the school curriculum. The initial approach was made through nutrition, which is of great interest to the class. Vegetable and fruit growing, soil fertility and erosion control, poultry and rabbit raising, and a few lessons on home improvement were some subjects taught. All lessons are supplemented by field and laboratory projects. The response to the course is very encouraging, especially in view of the fact that garden work was and still is considered women's work. It has made us happy to see the married men helping with the garden work, thus lightening the burden which the woman of Africa carries.

Blessing and healing to the suffering of our region was brought by the hospital workers who put their "five loaves and two fishes" into the Master's hands, making it possible to get through the period of Agnes Anderson's furlough creditably. Many thanks are again due to Dr. Osterholm for his faithfulness in making the long trip to Kikongo for surgery several times during the past year. Thanks are also due to our EPAMAC graduate, Joseph Bualala, to say nothing of the heavy responsibility laid upon Mrs. Smith during these months of the nurse's absence. It was not only her missionary colleagues who greeted Agnes Anderson's return with joy and thanksgiving.

"God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds."

Hebrews 1:1,2.

LEOPOLDVILLE

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES
REACHING YOUTH AT THE CAPITAL
NEW DISPENSARY PLANNED

Here the old is left behind and the people are ready for the new. The Christian Church has a great opportunity and a great responsibility. Our is at present the only Protestant mission doing effective work in Leopoldville West. The Salvation Army is just beginning work here. There are over 100,000 people in all of Leopoldville and in Leo West the population is considerable. We cannot begin to do what we should among them because of inadequate staffing - that is hardly a strong enough statement of the facts. At present we are three units, one of which is for the work of Mission Treasurer, one for Mission Secretary, that leaves one unit to devote full time to the work of Leopoldville station. The others do all they can, but at best they can give only a part of their time to the station work. Of necessity the work suffers under such an arrangement. .... The evangelistic work suffers most under this shortage. At present the one member of the full time staff gives the majority of her time to school. Without our native leadership the work would have failed, most notable among them is Lubikulu our new pastor. We had recently joined the two language groups into one church, and needed a man who knew both languages well. Among other things, Lubikulu and one of our deacons, Mubiala, have assumed part of the evangelistic work at the military camp, thus binding the people here in closer fellowship with our church people in the native city. This work is very promising. Every week new members are added to the church membership class and every month new members are received into our church.

A baptistry has been added to our church this year. For some time we have been forced to have baptismal services in a very unlovely spot on the river, where there is a mili-

tary depot. This year we have been unable to use this place, so we built a baptistry, several people having had a hand in it .... It is now finished and we have had three services in it. **The Sunday School has been reorganized** and we have prepared our own lessons. These lessons include memory verses and daily readings for the week. We meet with the teachers and discuss the lesson and ways to present it, each week. We have also begun a Junior Church, with school girls and women helping each Sunday.

Education and Evangelism cannot be separated. Our aim is to build strong Christian character in both young people and adults. Because this is our goal we can look forward with hope, for we work not alone. We have not begun to reach all the people of this community, but the little circle of love and dedication begun here must of necessity grow into wider and wider circles. If the school work is to be maintained there must be at least one full time worker with the school children. At the end of the last school year we went over all our class programs and reorganized them in the light of the government syllabus. It would be well if another year could be added to our school, for our highest ranking boys of this year will finish at the ages of 16 and 17. That is too young for them to be out from under the influence of school routine.

Government inspectors came to our school, examined our programs, our books, our library, class journals, note books, teachers and then the classes. When they left they said they had little fault to find, that as far as they could see we were doing what we should and they complimented us on our school.

We were also visited by men from the *Radio National Belge*, who were interested in native games. We released several classes to show them the games, and the next week we listened to a radio speech about them. They returned a second time to record a typical school program which was broadcast to Belgium. This broadcast included a chapel service, the carpenter shop, the kindergarten, a geography les-

son an oral French lesson in one of the girls' classes, recess, the church bell, the choir and a speech by Mr. H. D. Brown about the historical background of our work and our present work.

Evening school was begun in the fall. Those interested, pay to come and learn how to read and write as well as how to analyze difficult sentences in French.

A Mission Dispensary is very much needed at Leopoldville, to care for our church and school people. Dr. Tuttle took this up with the medical authorities and there is no objection to having one here on our school and church property. It is however up to the staff and Dr. Tuttle to finance this project. A room in the present buildings can be made available but a house for a medical worker is needed. We hope to carry this project through this year.

THE WORD MADE FLESH

As a babe He came, of a Virgin born,
And heaven touched earth that blessed morn.
Out from the sphere of the glory-light,
Into this realm of sin's dark night,
Away from the music of angel's song,
Into life's discord of strife and wrong.
Sent forth from the Father's throne above,
To bring to mankind His redeeming love.
Behold God's Son! Man with men to dwell,
Our Saviour, Lord, Immanuel.

Lucy Powell

MOANZA

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP
LEARNING TO SERVE
MOTHERS AND BABIES

A call for teacher-evangelists came from three different areas. Two of the calls had to go unanswered for lack of workers to send. But we did send one teacher to Kitawamba when the call came in the form of an idol, the size of a four year old child which the chief said they were willing to burn with all of their other idols and fetishes if we could bring them a witness of the true God. A small lad who knew the Lord, was sent. He bore a personal witness of what the Lord had done for him and what he was willing to do for them. A year later the chief himself had professed Christ and with him a great many in the village. They had faithfully attended worship and the classes of instruction organized for them .... Immediately another chief nearby asked for a teacher and then another and another. To-day our most flourishing post with the greatest number of earnest young people faithfully attending regional school is in that area. The young pastor, with his wife, just returned from Kimpese are a result of that awakening. Their home life is an inspiration to the thirty or more villages round about and a mighty witness to the power of the Gospel to transform heart and home and make hand and head a living witness for Him. While he is a good preacher, yet he enjoys most going about from village to village bearing a personal witness to His power and grace.

The two Kimpese Pastors and their wives who returned a year ago have made notable impressions, they have done a unique piece of work and are rapidly winning the confidence of the Christians and non-Christians and their contribution is profoundly appreciated by us all.

Financially progress can be reported since half of the field is entirely self-supporting, including the regional schools

one area more than half-supporting and one area still behind.

A vision of service for their people, has come to the girls' school. They are winning others to Christ. The school has grown in spirit and numbers. They have had a real mother in Naomi Lumengu. The Lord has blessed her service. The girls have followed her leading in work, in play and in school. **Eight boys are going for practice teaching.** We are praying earnestly that those boys will find joy in their service and be glad to continue in service for their Lord. In January these boys went with Miss Shepard on a ten day journey to a needy church center, visiting the villages there. They gave their testimonies, taught new songs and played games with the school children. The Lord really answered our prayers and helped the boys to gain a vision of the need of their own people. The boys prayed each day for the village to be visited the next day. They prayed that they might be yielded so the Lord could use them to help those people. That is our prayer for the coming year. That we Christian leaders may be used just as the Lord wishes, that our people may be helped and blessed.

The weekly prenatal clinic has had good attendance. The women have been helped by the Bible teaching given as well as otherwise. In the baby clinics we have seen improvement in the general health of the babies who come regularly. Our five orphans have grown and developed and their response to the little bit of extra care given has been a means of proving to the people that good food and care as well as a bit of discipline means a lot to children.

We have had about the same number and type of patients as last year. Dr. Osterholm visited us twice, and we are profoundly grateful to him. The girls who have helped as *aides-accoucheuses* and *aides-infirmières* have been very satisfactory, in contrast to other years when they have not wanted to work at the hospital. We were very sorry to lose one of these girls, who did not return after her vacation, since her catholic family married her off when she arrived in the village.

SONA BATA

REVEALING NUMBERS
SOLVING FOOD PROBLEMS
NEW EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES

A system of pastoral exchange has proved of considerable value and inspiration to the work as a whole. Meetings in the villages have been very large and enthusiastic. During the *Matondo* season (Thanksgiving Meetings) from June to September over 1,000 new church members were added by baptism from among over three times that number of inquirers. Since the beginning of the year 1947 some 300 more have been received into fellowship in the villages, the total number of those examined amounting to over 1,000. We expect that the same number will be dealt with during the dry season, the examinations and baptism probably taking place in the villages of the candidates rather than at the *Matondos* themselves. **All departments cooperate** in the task of evangelizing and in the endeavor to deepen the spiritual experience of our Congo Christians. Munzekila Pierre, our new pastor at Sona Bata, has shown an earnest and cooperative spirit, and is doing a good and needed work in the visitation of nearby villages.

Contributions by native churches during the year were about $3,500. New work has been extended among Bamfunuka, Bambeko, Badika - dika and Bankanu.

Our Hopes: That our present and prospective church leaders may have an increased sense of God's call and of consecration.

That all of our church members may be aroused to the challenge of stewardship of time, tithe and talents.

That a new consciousness of the urgency of our task may come to us and the native church.

That a gracious visitation of God's Spirit may quicken the hearts and enlarge the experience of our native believers in the whole field.

Over 80 boys and girls joined the class of candidates for baptism, at the beginning of the year. A large number were baptized at the *Matondo* and at Easter. We are thankful to God for the work of His Spirit amongst us.

In our district four new Regional Schools have been established, this makes seven. The students pay a tuition of a dollar a year which takes care of salaries of teachers and miscellaneous small expenses. Each school has gardens. A few schools have a Christian man with a family to supervise the manual work of the children. The greatest need of these schools at present is that of trained teachers.

The shortage of food has been one of the biggest difficulties of the past year. Since the exportation of cassava and rice and corn was stopped by the government the situation has greatly improved. Prices are somewhat lower. However the children from the nearby villages have often had to go home week-ends for cassava. Several of the school buildings on the station need to be replaced. The school girls' dormitory was condemned for use in 1928, but with some repair, it has been standing until this date, but it should not be used much longer. There is also a need for additional boys' dormitories.

Surgical and obstetrical cases come in great numbers, so many that we are on the verge of complaining, in contrast to a year ago when we were complaining about the new government regulation keeping patients away from Sona Bata. Financially we are somewhat better off than we were a year ago. With the help of several gifts and heavy surgical schedule we hope to have our deficit reduced by next year.

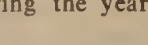
Our tremendous needs for equipment have been supplied to some extent by friends in the homeland. Several thousand dollars have been given from different sources for equipment. Anticipating the arrival of a laboratory technician we have ordered diphtheria toxoid and diasone for the purpose of carrying on experimental work in the treatment of leprosy. Later on we may also try out streptomycin.

It is planned to build another set of cubicles for

out-patients and relatives this year and to have the stage all set to commence the rebuilding of our operating suite as soon as the rains stop next year. Fortunately funds are available for these projects but we reiterate our need for a builder.

We appreciate the interest taken by the native staff and student body in the spiritual welfare of the average shifting population of five hundred patients and relatives, and anticipate that it will be stimulated and supplemented by our missionary personnel soon to be considerably reinforced.

We are most grateful to God for His strength and blessing so freely given and pray that a more fruitful service may be rendered during the year.



NEWS ITEMS

During the past three months we have welcomed Miss Helen Gaskill to Congo. She is now doing language study at Sona Bata. Miss Marguerite Eldredge is now at Moanza; Miss Grace Cooper at Kikongo and Miss Mary Bonar at Banza Manteke. It was with joy and thanksgiving that we welcomed Mrs. Leonard Gittings in the middle of August, after she and Stanley had been at home for five and one half months, during which time Mrs. Gittings underwent a serious operation. She has recovered and is now in good health.

Mr. and Mrs. B. W. Armstong left on July 2 for Copenhagen, to attend the Baptist Word Alliance and then went to U.S.A. for their furlough. The Misses Alice Jorgenson and Dorothy Wiseman went home for furlough in July. We hope very soon to welcome the Watkins family to Leopoldville to take up the work of Treasurer.

Rev. and Mrs. Roland Metzger left U.S. for Belgium in September where they will be doing French study for six months.

Dr. Jean Austin, now in Belgium, will be coming to Congo in the near future. She will be stationed at Sona Bata for language study and to work with Dr. Tuttle.

VANGA

AWAKENING OF MISSIONARY SPIRIT WINNING OTHERS — A BUSY DOCTOR'S YEAR

Previously unevangelized areas, have been reached this year, this is perhaps the major emphasis of the evangelistic program. The net gain in villages opened this year is 40, increasing the number of occupied villages to 354. The greatest success in these new areas has been in the region of the Nko river where a new post of twenty villages is flourshing. Although not yet self-supporting, this post is making great strides in that direction. At present financial assistance is being given by a nearby post and the *Kintwadi* (Fellowship) fund.

We have been heartened greatly by the manner in which so many of our "followers" have been striving to show themselves approved. Our two traveling evangelists report that an immense upswing has evidenced itself in the examination of those presenting themselves for baptism. Of these examined by the missionary this year 55.5 percent passed and were baptized, a considerable increase over the past year. **The Church rolls were revised,** and 6 to 7 hundred inactive members were dropped. This has paid dividends in an awakened interest upon the part of many, so that a considerable number of those dropped will be reclaimed. In addition there has been a strengthening of some who might be classed as "lukewarm". After this revision and the addition of those baptized this year we are able to report that the Vanga Church is composed of 8220 active, regularly giving members. **Missionary giving,** indicative of the awakening of a missionary spirit, increased, so that we could send $200 to the World Mission Crusade. Financially the past year has been a successful one. **The evangelistic missionary visited** all of the posts at least twice and 215 villages. However, obviously, yearly visits to only a part of the villages on the field are not adequate supervision, and the recent beginning of two new posts at

Leverville and Luzube, and the proposed division of another post of over one thousand members will require even more attention. Only the addition of another evangelistic couple can adequately meet the situation.

Vespers and Wednesday evening prayer meeting were in charge of the top year boarding school boys, who prepared their talks in Bible class. They first had to give the talk before the class, listen to criticism and suggestion, and then if satisfactory, they gave it before the entire school. We feel that this class has proved helpful in raising the quality of the boys' talks, and also in helping them learn how to prepare better talks

We are grateful for the way in which God has blessed us this year in every way, but especially for the teachers with whom we have worked. They have proved themselves to be sincere and consecrated and vitally interested in the spiritual and mental development of the boys.

During the dry season the central school teachers are traveling to examine the students and also to hold institutes for the village school teachers. A Regional School teachers' institute will be held. At this time we also hope to have the wives of the teachers and pastors on the station for a short time in order to plan with them for the girls' program in the regional schools.

Five girls are ready for Central School next year, and the following year we shall have many times that number. Our morning program included crocheting, embroidery, knitting, pottery, cooking, mending, cutting out and making of all kinds of children's clothing. Five of the girl teachers learned to make uniforms by machine. Instruction in Child Care, and Home Making by living in a model house, has proved successful. **A "Fishers of Men" Club was formed.** They met each Thursday night for prayer and Bible study. They prayed for the souls of their unsaved friends. Soon they came to the missionary wanting to pray because of their burden for souls. The unsaved and unbaptized girls began coming first to the girls then to the missionary asking to pray and be taught. "How can we know we are saved?" "What is the new birth?"

"How can we lead another person to Christ?" These are the kind of questions they asked.

"I have eleven operations to-morrow", said Dr. Osterholm, "One being a goiter and one a hysterectomy,....besides hernias, hydrocele, retroversion etc.etc." "I have been going strong and have been just about swamped with work....Just came back from Moanza where I was called on an emergency operation." That is the reason we can report a busy year at Vanga, because that is not just one day, but many days in one week the same thing happens. The hospital has been full and running over for months with no promise of a let-up. The hospital has been painted and equipped with new iron beds. The new maternity building is about half completed. Baby clinics and prenatal clinics have been held weekly.

"Teaching and giving preventive medicine in our distant villages has been burdening my heart. People who live only a few hours by car from our station, sicken and die without help because they cannot get to us. The work on the station and drain on my limited resources of energy make it impossible to make these much needed trips on foot and I have no car available for this work," writes Miss Dorothy Wiseman. "Last week I spent five days out in the district visiting five of our posts. I endeavored to take a small supply of medicines along and was literally swamped with really sick people seeking help. My supplies made only a dent in the surface of the great need, but it did serve to show the people in these more distant outposts that we were thinking of them. At one post where I began at six-thirty in the morning to give worm medicine, it became apparent that my supply would run out long before all were cared for. The women began to push and fight for front places and made it almost impossible for me to choose the worst cases. How I hated to turn away those pleading mothers with their weak anemic babies, many of whom would die before I could even hope to return to them".

BUILDING

Buildings are needed on every station. As you read of NEEDS, next to staff for the missionary work, buildings are needed to carry on satisfactorily. Mr. Atkins is our only builder and he has been for six months at Kikongo, where they have almost no permanent buildings. We need such a person on every station just at present. These are extracts from the reports:

Banza Manteke needs 2 boys' dormitories, a residence for a missionary family a study hall for the girls' school.

Kikongo needs boys' dormitories a residence for a missionary family and one for a single woman missionary.

Leopoldville needs an addition to one house, remodeling of an apartment for a family, a house for the native nurse whom we hope will come to carry on medical work.

Moanza needs a residence for a missionary family, monitors' houses, native nurses' houses.

Sona Bata needs a residence for a missionary family, hospital wards.

Vanga needs iron roofing for personnel houses and an entire new girls' compound.

Much building is being done by those who should be doing other work. Anyone who has the talent for this type of work and will give it to the Lord would be filling a needy phase of our mission service.

* * *

NEWS ITEM

The Robbins familly is now settled at Kikongo and the Abbotts at Moanza. Rev. and Mrs. Edwin Boone are expected at Leopoldville before the end of the year. They are now at Sona Bata for language study.

OUR SPECIAL SCHOOLS

PREPARING PASTORS AND TEACHERS--KIMPESE

The best that Protestant missions can produce. To uphold this standartd was a struggle for the reduced staff of four families. The burden was not made lighter by the failure of the light system and the low point to which the corps of African assistants has fallen. We come with a plea to missions to release us men whom they "cannot do without."

History has been made by the participation of four wives in men's classes where they made an excellent record.

The practising school enrolled 200 but with a mere handful in second degree, hence the decision to establish a boys' boarding school to enable E.P.I. students to have practice in teaching the four years of second degree (grades 3 to 6).

The 80 children of the kindergarten developed good habits of working and playing together and on their last day of school delighted all with a program of games, songs and pageantry.

The village preaching schedule engaged one third of the students three Sundays per month. Altogether 458 services were held with an average of 24 in attendance. The E.P.I· church gave 1000 francs to the British Bible Society.

Reforestation and erosion control by grass planting have been important but only a tour of inspection running into hours can reveal the magnitude of the student family gardens. Their flourishing state justifies the selection of this site despite its rather trying climate.

Throughout the war years, student labor counting largely, the accomodations of the school have doubled until the long rows of brick family houses stretch along the horizon. A long delayed construction program of larger buildings is soon to be under way. The chapel and the school unit are the complete inventory at present unless the shop sheds be counted.

The school is on the way to enlargement of equipment and

continued growth of school population which we trust may facilitate our reception of better prepared men. Above all we pray that all disciplines, all agreements, all presentations of techniques may result in the deepening of the spiritual life and the enlarging of the courage and ability to shoulder responsibility in the Congo section of the Kingdom of Heaven.

THIS IS EPAMAC

They have waited long for this day. They come from different villages and districts, some of them traveling for two weeks to reach Sona Bata. Yet their background is much the same. They were born in primitive villages, many of their homes were only a step from the rawest paganism. Their early education was in a small church school in perhaps a rather remote village. It was the Church of Christ that had first opened the avenues of a new life to them. And they want to go as far as possible. There are over thirty of them.

Now they have their new uniforms and have settled down to their five-year course of training. As you look at these clean-looking young men wearing their neat white outfits, it is evident that they have already come a long way from the dirt and disorder of the primitive village. In a land where the first principles of hygiene are unknown or ignored, they are learning to keep their bodies and minds clean. They are fully aware of the fact that disease is spread not by spirit influence, but by filth and germs. And they are beginning to realize that they have a tremendous work to do in spreading this knowledge to their own people in the disease-ridden and superstitious setting of the villages of this needy land.

Here they are then, spending the busy days in adding to their knowledge and technique. They gaze into microscopes, examine a skeleton, become familiar with the most modern medicines, and spend hours each day ministering sympathetically and helpfully to the hundreds of sick people who come into the hospital in a constant stream from an area covering many thousands of square miles. They learn, and

others learn from them too, that in this suffering world there is an imperative demand for service in the name of Him who "went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed". They are putting their Christian faith into action.

They are encouraged also to take a definite part in the more open and active forms of Christian ministry. Some of them become very acceptable preachers of the Gospel, and they take their turn regularly in passing on the word of life at meetings daily both in hospital and dispensary, and even in the local church. For they belong to the "Evangelical Hospital".

They have at last reached the end of at least this part of their road. Hundreds of their friends and visitors have come to see them receive the coveted diploma. Representatives of the Colonial Government and the missions they come from, sit on the platform. Apart from the open-air tropical setting in which the graduation exercises are held, the graduation is not unlike one held in America. But there is perhaps greater significance in it for this graduating class than for the average class in the homeland. These trained nurses, male and female, are part of the new Africa. They represent the outreach of the healing Christ to a sick and sinning people.

WANTED: A NEW NAME

For some years the Congo News Letter has been appearing under this very unimaginative name. Can you think of a new name for it? A contest is open to anyone who reads the Congo News Letter. Send in your suggestion to the editor, along with your name, address, and church membership before April 1, 1948. The new name will be chosen by the Publicity Committee of our Congo Mission. The winner of the contest will receive a one year subscription to the "?.????"— for a friend.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

More girls should be given training in our homes.

We must stress more the Home and woman's place in it.

We should be spiritual at all times, in all we teach others to do, whether it be making a bed, peeling potatoes or teaching a Bible class; all phases of life need God's Spirit. Our every action should be an act of worship.

Girls' Christian Endeavor group at Kikongo.

The Women's Society of Kikongo was organized. The women have grown in initiative and self-confidence. The sewing period is begun at the two o'clock bell. During this period conversational subjects are guided to include "What constitutes a Christian Home?" (grace at table, respect for each other, etc.) .... The sewing period is followed by a devotional service. The women have done very well in our World Day of Prayer programs etc.

Weekly lessons have been prepared and sent to each village in the Vanga area. The station women are showing more of an interest in their Sunday School class and weekly meetings, also more go to chapel in the morning.

Great success is reported of Ruth Dickey's camps for girls. Many decisions are made at the meetings.

Men Christians outnumbered women ten to one at Moanza ten years ago, now they are about equal.

A woman followed courses in a men's class at Kimpese and made excellent marks. For half of the year three others also took work in men's classes and next year at least two will have such a program.

Visitation in the homes is much needed at Leopoldville. It is a typical city work.

Congo Hearth is the name of a special women's paper which we hope to translate into the different dialects and circulate among the women.

(*See account of school work done with girls on the various stations*)

OUR NEED OF MISSIONARIES

What constitutes a Missionary Call? That question is discussed over and over again, but is not the answer simply the NEED? The call from Macedonia was simply, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." Acts 16:9. The call from Congo to-day is the same. There was a need and Paul went. There is a need here, and our hope and prayer is that some will come to fill it.

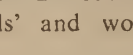
It is impossible to pick out one station or one phase of the work and say, "this is the greatest need." There are so many equally challenging opportunities to work for the Lord, that we cannot enumerate them all, but as you read the accounts of each station you will find the various places where missionaries can be of great service. You will read that "evangelistic work suffers most because of lack of staff"; "evangelistic work shows effects of lack of full time worker" "yearly visits to only part of the villages is not adequate supervision, only the addition of another evangelistic worker will adequately meet the situation." Not included in these accounts but also coming under "Requests for Prayer" is an evangelistic missionary to begin a Bible Training School in the Kwango area; a second evangelistic or educational worker for every station, so that the field work can be cared for adequately as well as the large numbers of boys in the boarding schools on the stations. At Vanga the boys' school is partially supervised by Mr. Jump, but the greater portion of supervision falls to Mrs. Jump, while her husband travels in the district evangelizing. All the other station boarding schools for boys are carried on entirely by our single women. These boys need MEN to supervise and train them. There is an ever increasing need for the women to give full time to the training and teaching of women and girls.

As to medical workers, when Dr. Osterholm goes home on furlough in February, the Kwango stations, Vanga, Moanza and Kikongo will be left with only nurses, since it is too

far away for the doctor from Sona Bata to visit. Dr. Tuttle will be at Sona Bata. Dr. Jean Austin whom we expect to come soon from Belgium, will be stationed there also, as it is required by the Government that the medical school have two doctors and two nurses as the teaching staff. Dr. Tuttle and Dr. Austin will supervise the Sona Bata hospital and field work, the Banza Manteke hospital and Kimpese medical work, and when the dispensary is established at Leopoldville, they will supervise that. There is a great field of service for nurses, but they do not take the place of doctors. If you read in the October 1946 Congo News Letter, "The Call for Medical Missionaries", you will get some idea of the opportunities here in Congo for medical workers.

In short OUR NEED FOR MISSIONARIES is: married couples for evangelistic and educational work, and doctors; single women for girls' and women's work and nursing, or women doctors.

"And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them." Acts 16:10.



"The coming of the Christmas angels is ever a miracle of joy and happiness. There they stood, brownskinned, bright eyed angels, singing "Gloria in excelsis Deo." I saw those angels in homes of the their own, training up a new generation of angels, who in turn would live anew the song of hope and love. I saw them walking side by side with their Christian husbands, making Christian homes. I saw them visiting the sick, working in Congo schools and hospitals, seeking to live their angelic message. I saw their Christian influence spread to cover their city and country, and the whole world. The training of angel messengers is the work of God himself."

—"*My Congo Angels*" *by Phyllis Benner -C. N. L. Jan. 1946*

THANKSGIVING

Bless the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Psalm 103:1,2.

As we look at the over-all picture of the last year, it is impossible to decide where to start in giving thanks to God. Our hearts are full of gratitude to Him as we realize what has been done, and under such handicapped conditions in many cases, but we can say that He has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The growth of native leadership is perhaps one of most heartening causes for thanksgiving. To mention some by name would not be exactly fair, because there are those who are equally deserving of mention who do not get into the "news". We are thankful for those who have had training at Kimpese and are faithfully serving in the different fields. During the past few years there has been a greater shortage of missionary staff because of the war, and during that time these men and women have stepped out and taken responsibilities which would never have fallen to them had it not been necessary for someone to assume these responsibilities. If you read the preceding pages you will learn of specific cases where work has been kept up by native leaders in place of missionaries.

Increased staff is another real cause for thanksgiving. We have had several new missionaries just out from home and French study in Belgium, as well as many returned from furloughs which had of necessity been lenghthened. Now our staff numbers more than it has for many years.

New work extended in some individual fields, and most of all we are thankful that the site for the Bayaka station has been decided and negotiations begun to get the land from the Government. When it is possible to put up buildings on this site the people in the Bayaka field will have closer supervision, and training will be begun on the new station just as we have on the other stations.

REQUESTS FOR PRAYER

"Our Hopes", found in the account of the Sona Bata evangelistic work, is applicable to our whole work. Above all we want spiritual growth and maturity in **The Church Of Christ In Congo.** And not only they need prayer, but also the missionary personnel in the Congo Mission.'

Better trained leaders are urgently needed, as you will see from Mr. Armstrong's report of the lack of sufficiently trained men for the church and school work. Better qualified candidates for the training school at Kimpese, and the quickening of the desire for service among our Congo Christian men and women, boys and girls, is desired.

A Bible Training School in the Kwango, is one of the plans talked about to meet this need. This is for men who cannot qualify for Kimpese, but who would make faithful workers for village work. Such a school would fit them to carry on more effective work than they are doing at present, with no more than village schooling in many cases.

The new Bayaka Station, is a subject which needs much prayer. For the missionary who will be working among the Bayaka people. For sufficient staff to make it possible to begin the buildings, and establish a permanent station there, and that the people will respond to the Gospel message.

Another new station in the Kwango, between Kikongo and Sona Bata is the next move we hope to make in the extension of our work. We are now concentrating on the new Bayaka station, but as soon as possible we hope to begin putting this new plan into action.

The new Dispensary at Leopoldville, where our school children and church people need medical care for minor ailments. The city medical work is carried on by catholic sisters, and the Government doctor.

Missionaries are needed, as you will see from the special account given on that topic.

A PAGE OF STATISTICS

	Villages	Evangelists	Christians	Inquirers	Baptisms	Contributions Church	Contributions Missions
Banza Manteke	135	141	4,678	280	412	$1282	$ 28
Kikongo	232	186	4,420	4,836	171	$1206	
Kimpese			232		10		$152
Leopoldville	2	2	334	55	16	$ 293	
Moanza	140	147	2,172	600	118	$ 452	
Sona Bata	316	319	7,258	3,051	1,153	$2780	$519
Vanga	363	389	7,018	10,000	1,063	$2318	$312
Totals	1,188	1,184	26,112	18,822	2,943	$8331	$1011

	Schools	Teachers	Pupils	Patients In	Patients Out	Operations	In charge
Banza Manteke	148	191	4,791	1397	13214	156	Nurse & Assistants
Kikongo	248	212	7,722	1525	4794	141	" "
Kimpese	1	17	476	54	2433	40	" "
Leopoldville	2	15	535	No Medical Work			
Moanza	152	166	3,663	1448	5921	245	" "
Sona Bata	263	298	5,955	1537	31605	803	Doctor, Nurse, "
Vanga	380	441	14,550	1840	19330	768	" " "
Totals	1,194	1,340	37,692	7801	77297	2153	

WHAT IS THE CONGO NEWS LETTER?

Just what is this Congo News Letter that you receive four times a year? Who publishes it? Who subscribes to it? Who furnishes the material for it? What is its purpose? Do you know the answers or are you like some folks who think — "Oh, just another pamphlet" — and throw it in the waste-basket? Just in case you are one of the folks who does read it even though you can't answer all these questions about it — we want to answer them for you.

First of all the Congo News Letter is a Congo news letter.

But who writes the articles? We do. And by we, I mean your missionaries here in Congo. We must admit that sometimes it's pretty hard to take time out from the myriad other duties that come to our hands and write about them, but we do it. You see we remember when we were back home how much we enjoyed hearing news from the missionaries at work. And we think that you aren't at all different from us so we try to squeeze a CNL article into our busy schedules occasionally. And who subscribes? We do — for you our friends at home. And you do — for yourself and your friends. Or do you? It would cost you only 35 cents a year to send a subscription to some friend who is interested in Congo, or who ought to be. Perhaps you haven't realized that your 35 cents invested in the Congo News Letter might help some young man or woman to make the final decision to give his life to the work of Christ in the Congo. Perhaps it hasn't occurred to you that it might lead some one else to invest dollars in the cause of Christ in the Congo. Perhaps you haven't thought that it might be the thing that makes some friend of yours take an account of himself and find that he is not self-sufficient but that he needs the Christ of the Congo for himself.

We have a real purpose in publishing our Congo News Letter. Of course, it's propaganda — propaganda for Christ in Congo. It's propaganda to make you folks at home realize that you are needed in Congo — some of you in person, some of you through your financial aid, all of you through your prayers. But it is propaganda also to make you realize that not only does Christ need you here, but that you need Christ in your heart.

BELGIAN CONGO MISSION DIRECTORY
with P. O. addresses*

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Miss Annis Ford

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STUDYING IN BELGIUM — Rev. and Mrs. R.G.Metzger
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* *Precede name of each station with A.B.F.M.S.*